

31 MAY 1963

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The Director, National Reconnaissance Office (S)

SUBJECT: Operational Aspects of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) (S)

Reference: C/JCS memo to Sec Def, subject as above, dated 2 May 63 (file CM 542-63).

I have reviewed the above referenced memorandum and have reached the following conclusions.

a. I agree in principle with the organizational management recommended by the Director, National Reconnaissance Office, and concurred in by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

b. Final agreement on this organizational arrangement is contingent upon JCS/Director, NRO concurrence in the explicit additional duties to be performed by the JRC in this connection. Accordingly, I am transmitting as Attachment I the Terms of Reference for these additional JRC duties. I understand these Terms of Reference are acceptable to the parties concerned. I am also transmitting as Attachment II, for any further JCS comments, a delineation of proposed additional functions and responsibilities of the JRC, compatible with the Terms of Reference, which would also form the basis for modification of the JRC charter. I should like to be informed of final JCS/Director, NRO concurrence on these matters by June 10, 1963.

c. I agree with the specific recommendation of the Director, NRO, concurred in by the Chiefs, that NRO responsibility for aircraft overflights will shift to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in periods of tension. Such shifts of responsibility will be submitted to the Secretary of Defense for approval.

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d. I do not concur in the JCS proposal that R&D responsibilities for satellite reconnaissance systems to be used in central or limited war be assigned to the military Services. It is my present view that responsibility for reconnaissance satellite R&D and operation should remain as assigned in the National Reconnaissance Office, and that adequate mechanisms exist to promulgate the development of such systems for potential employment through National Reconnaissance Office channels.

e. I request that the JCS by June 24, 1963, inform the Director, National Reconnaissance Office of any established and approved R&D requirements for realistic employment of satellites for reconnaissance in central and limited wars which, in the opinion of the JCS, are yet to be fulfilled or would require different implementation.

*Rowell B. Epstein*

2 Attachments

- I - Terms of Reference  
NRO/JCS Aircraft
- II - Proposed Additional  
Duties of JRC

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